

IRS News Release

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New Web Feature Helps with Lost Refund Checks

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WASHINGTON — “Where’s My Refund?,” the popular Internet-based service used by taxpayers to check on their federal income tax refunds, now offers a safe and easy way to trace refund checks and update a flawed mailing address.

These enhancements allow taxpayers to start a trace for lost or missing refund checks and notify the Internal Revenue Service of an address change when a refund check goes undelivered.

“This new feature lets taxpayers take quick and easy steps to track down a lost refund,” said IRS Commissioner Mark W. Everson. “It can reduce headaches for nearly 88,000 taxpayers who wind up with undelivered refund checks each year.”

Taxpayers securely access their personal refund information through IRS.gov, the agency’s Web site. They enter their Social Security number, filing status and the exact amount of their refund. These shared secrets — data known only to the taxpayer and IRS — verify the person is authorized to access the account and make it possible to avoid delays in tracing refunds and changing an address.

Taxpayers used “Where’s My Refund?” nearly 24 million times last year and have used it more than 16 million times so far this year.

The new features offer step-by-step instructions to allow taxpayers to trace their lost checks and change or correct their mailing addresses when their refund checks have been returned to the IRS as undeliverable. When the taxpayer makes the change online, it automatically updates the IRS database and provides a date when the refund check should be received.

The new services are specialized so only those taxpayers who actually need the services will see them online. The refund trace can be started 28 days after the date the IRS says the refund check was mailed. Taxpayers who file married, filing joint tax returns must also complete and fax or mail a copy of Form 3911, Taxpayer Statement Regarding Refund. Signatures of both taxpayers must be on the form. The form is only required for those whose filing status is married, filing joint.

Taxpayers can avoid undelivered refund checks by having their refunds directly deposited into a personal checking or savings account. Direct deposit also guards against theft or lost refund checks. The option is available for both paper and electronically filed returns.

Almost 36 million taxpayers have used direct deposit for \$94 billion in refunds this year. The number of direct deposit refunds is up nearly 12 percent from last year.

Link: "Where's My Refund?" —

<http://www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=96596,00.html>